

# THE UNIVERSITY OF HARD KNOCKS!

The School That Completes Our Education!

(Lesson 1 & Lesson 2)



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## Acknowledgements

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Hopefully by giving you this information it will help you to also have a successful online business.

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It has been invaluable to me.

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## Acknowledgements

**Bryan Winters** is another person that I want you to know.

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If you really want to succeed online than let me introduce you to Bryan.

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Talk about a great programmer, business person and human being. It is my privilege to introduce you to my friend.

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Well there you have it. I hope you will get to know some of my friends.

They certainly have been instrumental in helping me to become a success on a shoe string budget.

May you have the same success with them as I have.

The University of Hard Knocks!  
By Ralph Parlette & Jim Phillips  
ViralNEWS.com

## **About This eBook**

The University of Hard Knocks!  
Ralph Parlette (1870-1930)

LADIES and Gentlemen: I do not want to be seen in this lecture. I want to be heard. I am only the delivery wagon. When the delivery wagon comes to your house, you are not much interested in how it looks; you are interested in the goods it brings you. You know some very good goods are sometimes delivered to you in some very poor delivery wagons.

So in this lecture, please do not pay any attention to the delivery wagon--how much it squeaks and wheezes and rattles and wabbles. Do not pay much attention to the wrappings and strings. Get inside to the goods.

Really, I believe the goods are good. I believe I am to recite to you some of the multiplication table of life--not mine, not yours alone, but everybody's.

Can Only Pull the Plug!

Every audience has a different temperature, and that makes a lecture go differently before every audience. The kind of an audience is just as important as the kind of a lecture. A cold audience will make a good lecture poor, while a warm audience will make a poor lecture good.

Let me illustrate:

When I was a boy we had a barrel of sorghum in the woodshed. When mother wanted to make ginger-bread or cookies, she would send me to the woodshed to get a bucket of sorghum from that barrel.

Some warm September day I would pull the plug from the barrel and the sorghum would fairly squirt into my bucket. Later in the fall when it was colder, I would pull the plug but the sorghum would not squirt. It would come out slowly and reluctantly, so that I would have to wait a long while to get a little sorghum. And on some real cold winter day I would pull the plug, but the sorghum would not run at all. It would just look out at me.

I discovered it was the temperature.

I have brought a barrel of sorghum to this audience. The name of the sorghum is "The University of Hard Knocks." I can only pull the plug. I cannot make it run. That will depend upon the temperature of this audience. You can have all you want of it, but to get it to running freely, you will have to warm up.

Did You Bring a Bucket?

No matter how the sorghum runs, you have to have a bucket to get it. How much any one gets out of a lecture depends also upon the size of the bucket he brings to get it in. A big bucket can get filled at a very small stream. A little bucket gets little at the greatest stream. With no bucket you can get nothing at Niagara.

That often explains why one person says a lecture is great, while the next person says he got nothing out of it.

What It's All About

Here is a great mass of words and sentences and pictures to express two or three simple little ideas of life, that our education is our growing up from the Finite to the Infinite, and that it is done by our own personal overcoming, and that we never finish it.

Have you noticed that no sentence, nor a million sentences, can bound life? Have you noticed that every statement does not quite cover it? No statement, no library, can tell all about life. No success rule can alone solve the problem. You must average it all and struggle up to a higher vision.

We are told that the stomach needs bulk as well as nutriment. It would not prosper with the necessary elements in their condensed form. So abstract truths in their lowest terms do not always promote mental digestion like more bulk in the way of pictures and discussions of these truths. Here is bulk as well as nutriment.

If you get the feeling that the first personal pronoun is being overworked, I remind you that this is more a confession than a lecture. You cannot confess without referring to the confesser.

To Everybody in My Audience

I like you because I am like you.

I believe in you because I believe in myself. We are all one family. I believe in your Inside, not in your Outside, whoever you are, whatever you are, wherever you are.

I believe in the Angel of Good inside every block of human marble.  
I believe it must be carved out in The University of Hard Knocks.

**The University Of Hard Knocks!**     - 9 -

I believe all this pride, vanity, selfishness, self-righteousness, hypocrisy and human frailty are the Outside that must be chipped away.

I believe the Hard Knocks cannot injure the Angel, but can only reveal it.

I hope you are getting your Hard Knocks.

I care little about your glorious or inglorious past. I care little about your present. I care much about your future for that is to see more of the Angel in you.

The University of Hard Knocks

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### ***Lesson I - The Books Are Bumps***

THE greatest school is the University of Hard Knocks. Its books are bumps.

Every bump is a lesson. If we learn the lesson with one bump, we do not get that bump again. We do not need it. We have traveled past it. They do not waste the bumps. We get promoted to the next bump.

But if we are "naturally bright," or there is something else the matter with us, so that we do not learn the lesson of the bump we have just gotten, then that bump must come back and bump us again.

Some of us learn to go forward with a few bumps, but most of us are "naturally bright" and have to be pulverized.

The tuition in the University of Hard Knocks is not free.

Experience is the dearest teacher in the world. Most of us spend our lives in the A-B-C's of getting started.

We matriculate in the cradle.

We never graduate. When we stop learning we are due for another bump.

There are two kinds of people--wise people and fools. The fools are the people who think they have graduated.

The playground is all of God's universe.

The university colors are black and blue.

The yell is "ouch" repeated ad lib.

The Need of the Bumps

When I was thirteen I knew a great deal more than I do now. There was a sentence in my grammar that disgusted me. It was by some foreigner I had never met. His name was Shakespeare. It was this:

"Sweet are the uses of adversity; Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous, Wears yet a priceless jewel in its head; And thus our life, exempt from public haunt, Finds tongues in trees, books in running brooks, Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

"Tongues in trees," I thought. "Trees can't talk! That man is crazy. Books in running brooks! Why nobody never puts no books in no running brooks. They'd get wet. And that sermons in stones! They get preachers to preach sermons, and they build houses out of stones."

I was sorry for Shakespeare--when I was thirteen.

But I am happy today that I have traveled a little farther. I am happy that I have begun to learn the lessons from the bumps. I am happy that I am learning the sweet tho painful lessons of the University of Adversity. I am happy that I am beginning to listen.

For as I learn to listen, I hear every tree speaking, every stone preaching and every running brook the unfolding of a book.

Children, I fear you will not be greatly interested in what is to follow.

Perhaps you are "naturally bright" and feel sorry for Shakespeare.

I was not interested when father and mother told me these things.

I knew they meant all right, but the world had moved since they were young, and now two and two made seven, because we lived so much faster.

It is so hard to tell young people anything. They know better. So they have to get bumped just where we got bumped, to learn that two and two always makes four, and "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

But if you will remember some of these things, they will feel like poultices by and by when the bumps come.

### The Two Colleges

As we get bumped and battered on life's pathway, we discover we get two kinds of bumps--bumps that we need and bumps that we do not need.

Bumps that we bump into and bumps that bump into us.

We discover, in other words, that The University of Hard Knocks has two colleges--The College of Needless Knocks and The College of Needful Knocks.

We attend both colleges.

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## ***Lesson II - The College of Needless Knocks***

The Bumps That We Bump Into NEARLY all the bumps we get are Needless Knocks.

There comes a vivid memory of one of my early Needless Knocks as I say that. It was back at the time when I was trying to run our home to suit myself. I sat in the highest chair in the family circle. I was three years old and ready to graduate.

That day they had the little joy and sunshine of the family in his high-chair throne right up beside the dinner table. The coffee-pot was within grabbing distance.

I became enamored with that coffee-pot. I decided I needed that coffee-pot in my business. I reached over to get the coffee-pot.

Then I discovered a woman beside me, my mother. She was the most meddlesome woman I had ever known. I had not tried to do one thing in three years that that woman had not meddled into.

And that day when I wanted the coffee-pot--I did want it. Nobody knows how I desired that coffee-pot. "One thing thou lackest," a coffee-pot-- I was reaching over to get it, that woman said, "Don't touch that!"

The longer I thought about it the more angry I became. What right has that woman to meddle into my affairs all the time? I have stood this petticoat tyranny three years, and it is time to stop it!

I stopped it. I got the coffee-pot. I know I got the coffee-pot. I got it unanimously. I know when I got it and I also know where I got it. I got about a gallon of the reddest, hottest coffee a bad boy ever spilled over himself.

O-o-o-o-o-o! I can feel it yet!

There were weeks after that when I was upholstered. They put applebutter on me--and coal oil and white-of-an-egg and starch and anything else the neighbors could think of. They would bring it over and rub it on the little joy and sunshine of the family, who had gotten temporarily eclipsed.

Teaching a Wilful Child

You see, my mother's way was to tell me and then let me do as I pleased. She told me not to get the coffee-pot and then let me get it, knowing that it would burn me. She would say, "Don't." Then she would go on with her knitting and let me do as I pleased.

Why don't mothers knit today?

Mother would say, "Don't fall in the well." I could go and jump in the well after that and she would not look at me. I do not argue that this is the way to raise children, but I insist that this was the most kind and effective way to rear one stubborn boy I know of.

The neighbors and the ladies' aid society often said my mother was cruel with that angel child. But the neighbors did not know what kind of an insect mother was trying to raise. Mother did know. She knew how stubborn and self-willed I was. It came from father's "side of the house."

Mother knew that to argue with me was to flatter me. Tell me, serve notice upon me, and then let me go ahead and get my coffee-pot.

That was the quickest and kindest way to teach me.

I learned very quickly that if I did not hear mother, and heed, a coffee-pot would spill upon me. I cannot remember when I disobeyed my mother that a coffee-pot of some kind did not spill upon me, and I got my blisters. Mother did not inflict them. Mother was not much of an inflicter. Father attended to that in the laboratory behind the parsonage.

"Stop, Look, Listen"

And thru the bumps we learn that The College of Needless Knocks runs on the same plan. The Voice of Wisdom says to each of us, "Child of humanity, do right, walk in the right path. You will be wiser and happier." The tongues in the trees, the books in the running brooks and the sermons in the stones all repeat it.

But we are not compelled to walk in the right path. We are free im-moral agents.

We get off the right path. We go down forbidden paths. They seem easier and more attractive. It is so easy to go downward. We slide downward, but we have to make effort to go upward.

Anything that goes downward will run itself. Anything that goes upward has to be pushed.

And going down the wrong path, we get bumped harder and harder until we listen.

We are lucky if we learn the lesson with one bump. We are unlucky when we get bumped twice in the same place, for it means we are making no progress.

When we are bumped, we should "stop, look, listen." "Safety first!"

One time I paid a seeress two dollars to look into my honest palm.

She said, "It hain't your fault. You wasn't born right. You was born under an unlucky star." You don't know how that comforted me.

It wasn't my fault--all my bumps and coffee-pots! I was just unlucky and it had to be.

How I had to be bumped to learn better! Now when I get bumped I try to learn the lesson of the bump and find the right path, so that when I see that bump coming again I can say, "Excuse me; it hath a familiar look," and dodge it.

The seeress is the soothing syrup for mental infants.

Blind Man's Fine Sight

The other day I watched a blind man go down the aisle of the car to get off the train. Did you ever study the walk of a blind man? He "pussyfooted" it along so carefully. He bumped his hand against a seat. Then he did what every blind man does, he lifted his hand higher and didn't bump any more seats.

I looked down my nose. "Ralph Parlette," I said to myself, "when are you going to learn to see as well as that blind man? He learns his lesson with one bump, and you have to go bumping into the same things day after day and wonder why you have so much 'bad luck!'"

Are You Going Up or Down?

Let me repeat, things that go downward will run themselves. Things that go upward have to be pushed. Going upward is overcoming.

Notice that churches, schools, lyceums, chautauquas, reform movements--things that go upward--never run themselves. They must be pushed all the time.

And so with our own lives. Real living is conscious effort to go upward to larger life.

If you are making no effort in your life, if you are moving in the line of least resistance, depend upon it you are going downward.

Look out for the bumps!

Look over your community. Note the handful of brave, faithful, unselfish souls who are carrying the community burdens and pushing upward. Note the multitude making little or no effort, and even getting in the way of the pushers.

Majorities do not rule. Majorities never have ruled. It is the brave minority of thinking, self-sacrificing people that decides the tomorrow of communities that go upward. Majorities are not willing to make the effort to rule themselves. They are content to drift and be amused and follow false gods that promise something for nothing. They must be led--sometimes driven--by minorities.

People are like sheep. The shepherd can lead them to heaven--or to hell.

### Bumping the Prodigals

Human life is the story of the Prodigal Son. We look over the fence of goodness into the mystery of the great unknown world beyond and in that unknown realm we fondly imagine is happiness.

Down the great white way of the world go the million prodigals, seeking happiness where nobody ever found happiness. Their days fill up with disappointment, their vision becomes dulled. They become anaemic feeding upon the husks.

They just must get their coffee-pot!

How they must be bumped to think upon their ways. Every time we do wrong we get a Needless Knock. Every time! We may not always get bumped on the outside, but we always get bumped on the inside. A bump on the conscience is worse than a bump on the "noodle."

"I can do wrong and not get bumped. I have no feelings upon the subject," somebody says, You can? You poor old sinner, you have bumped your conscience numb. That is why you have no feelings on the subject. You have pounded your soul into a jelly. You don't know how badly you are hurt.

How the old devil works day and night to keep people amused and doped so that they will not think upon their ways! How he keeps the music and the dazzle going so they will not see they are bumping themselves!

### Consider the Sticky Flypaper

Did you ever watch a fly get his Needless Knocks on the sticky flypaper?

The last thing Mamma Fly said as Johnny went off to the city was, "Remember, son, to stay away from the sticky flypaper. That is where your poor dear father was lost." And Johnny Fly remembers for several minutes. But when he sees all

the smart young flies of his set go over to the flypaper, he goes over, too. He gazes down at his face in the stickiness. "Ah! how pretty I am! This sticky flypaper shows me up better than anything at home. What a fine place to skate. Just see how close I can fly over it and not get stuck a bit. Mother is such a silly old worryer. She means all right, of course, but she isn't up-to-date. We young set of modern flies are naturally bright and have so many more advantages. You can't catch us. They were too strict with me back home."

You see Johnny fly back and forth and have the time of his naturally bright young life. Afterwhile, tho, he stubs his toe and lands in the stickiness. "Well, well, how nice this is on the feet, so soft and soothing!"

First he puts one foot down and pulls it out. That is a lot of fun.

It shows he is not a prisoner. He is a strong-minded fly. He can quit it or play in it, just as he pleases. After while he puts two feet down in the stickiness. It is harder to pull them out. Then he puts three down and puts down a few more trying to pull them out.

"Really," says Johnny Fly bowing to his comrades also stuck around him, "really, boys, you'll have to excuse me now. Good-bye!" But he doesn't pull loose. He feels tired and he sits down in the sticky flypaper. It is a fine place to stick around. All his young set of flies are around him. He does like the company. They all feel the same way--they can play in the sticky flypaper or let it alone, just as they please, for they are strong-minded flies. They have another drink and sing, "We won't go home till morning."

Johnny may get home, but he will leave a wing or a leg.

Most of them stay. They just settle down into the stickiness with sleeping sickness.

The tuition in The College of Needless Knocks is very high indeed!

"Removed" or "Knocked Out"?

The man who goes to jail ought to congratulate himself if he is guilty. It is the man who does not get discovered who is to be pitied, for he must get some more knocks.

The world loves to write resolutions of respect. How often we write, "Whereas, it has pleased an all-wise Providence to remove," when we might reasonably ask whether the victim was "removed" or merely "knocked out."

There is a good deal of suicide charged up to Providence.